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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

# GYPSY MOTH



Closeup of *a*, ovipositing female; *b*, male; *c*, female pupa; *d*, male pupa; *e*, old egg mass. Larvae on oak leaf: *f*, first instar; *g*, second instar; *h*, fourth instar; *i*, sixth instar or mature larva. Egg masses, *k*, under branches and on rock; *l*, young larvae spinning down. *a* to *i* about natural size; *k* and *l* reduced. (See other side for life history and control.)

Picture Sheet No. 26



# THE GYPSY MOTH

(*Porthetria dispar* (L.))

The gypsy moth is a serious pest of forest and shade trees in New England and eastern New York. It has appeared from time to time in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Michigan, and Ohio, where use of insecticides has had good results.

Caterpillars, or larvae, of the gypsy moth kill trees or retard growth by feeding on the leaves. Two successive defoliations can kill oak, birch, poplar, willow, linden, apple, and other hardwoods. A single defoliation may kill pine and hemlock.

The gypsy moth was accidentally introduced from Europe into Medford, Mass., in 1869, and has spread over nearly 40 million acres. In 1953, 11½ million acres of woodlands were defoliated 25 to 100 percent.

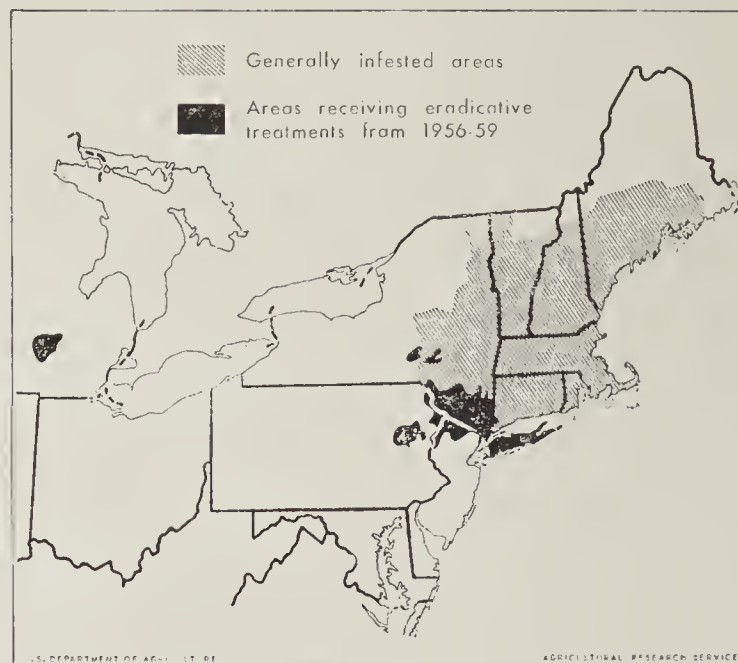
The gypsy moth has one generation a year. The insects pass the winter as eggs in velvetlike, buff-colored masses attached to stones, tree trunks, logs, lumber, fences, and other objects. These masses contain 400 to 500 eggs. The eggs hatch in late April or early May. The brownish, hairy caterpillars grow to about 2 inches in length. They form pupae in late June or early July and emerge as moths in July or early August. The moths do not feed. Only the males can fly.

## Quarantine Regulations

Wherever the gypsy moth is found, the area is placed under quarantine regulations. To make sure that you do not violate regulations governing the movement of articles from regulated to nonregulated areas, consult a State or Federal plant pest control inspector if you intend to transport trees, lumber, wood, quarystone, or other articles that might harbor the pest.

## Eradication Programs

Since 1956 the States and the U.S. Department of Agriculture have con-



ducted cooperative programs to eradicate the moths. At the outer limits of the generally infested area, DDT is applied at the rate of 1 pound per acre in 1 gallon of No. 2 fuel oil. Inside the generally infested area, DDT is applied by airplane or mist blower to suppress outbreaks and prevent defoliation of trees; it is applied at the rate of ½ to ¾ pound per acre. DDT emulsions also are used, particularly with mist blowers. These measures have eliminated many infestations outside the generally infested area.

Care is taken during application of DDT to prevent spray from drifting into bodies of water or on forage crops that dairy animals consume, and that the residue is well under the amount considered safe on vegetables and other crops for human use.

Insecticides other than DDT may be substituted in this program as they prove effective and safe.

If you use DDT for gypsy moth control, closely follow directions and precautions on the label. You may hire a spray operator to treat your trees.

More detailed information may be obtained from the Regional Office, Plant Pest Control Division, U.S. Department of Agriculture, P.O. Box 93, Moorestown, N.J.

Washington, D.C.

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